

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

This amendment is in response to the Office Action dated November 3, 2003. Appreciation is expressed for the allowance of claims 8-15 and 20 set forth in the Office Action.

By the present amendment, claims 1-7, 16-19, 21-23 and 26-28 have been cancelled to obviate any issues regarding these claims (noting that this cancellation is without prejudice to the Applicants' right to proceed with the subject matter of these claims by way of a Continuation or Divisional application). As such, the objection to claims 2 and 3 set forth on page 2 of the Office Action is obviated, together with the prior art rejection of claims 21 and 26-28.

Also by the present amendment, claims 24 and 25 have been amended to depend on the allowed claim 8 (with appropriate minor amendments to provide clear antecedent relationship between the claims 24 and 25 and their parent claim 8). Accordingly, allowance of claims 24 and 25, together with their independent parent claim 8, is respectfully requested.

In addition, by the present amendment, claim 14 has been amended to depend on claim 8 rather than claim 1. With regard to this, it is noted claim 14 had been indicated as allowable in the Office Action, notwithstanding the fact that it was dependent on the cancelled claim 1. Accordingly, by the present amendment, claim 14 has been amended to depend on the allowed claim 8, noting that the language of claim 8 provides the same support for the claim language of claim 14 as was found

Application No.: 09/930,944

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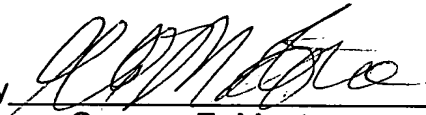
in the original parent claim 1. Accordingly, entry of this amendment to claim 14 for purposes of clarification is also respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that there are any other points which may be clarified or otherwise disposed of either by telephone discussion or by personal interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Docket No. 520.40395X00), and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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